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# THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY OF TEBESSA, ALGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

The research explores the importance of architectural and urban heritage for its positive impacts on cities and societies. It highlights how such heritage embodies cultural identity, connects past and present, and promotes tourism and economic development. Tebessa, in eastern Algeria, serves as a case study due to its rich architectural and urban heritage, influenced by Phoenician, Numidian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic civilizations.

Key landmarks in Tebessa include the Temple of Minerve, Caracalla Gate, Byzantine Wall, Roman Theatre, Roman Church, Archaeological Park, and Ancient Mosque. These sites create an open archaeological space within the urban fabric, serving as cultural heritage and vital resources for tourism and economic revitalization. The research initially adopts a theoretical approach to identify and describe various heritage sites. It then employs fieldwork, involving the Directorate of Tourism, the Directorate of Culture, and the Department of Archaeological Sites, to assess the status and significance of these monuments.

Findings reveal several issues, such as the lack of strategic and institutional efforts to protect and utilize the heritage for cultural tourism and economic development. There is significant neglect and deterioration due to inadequate restoration programs and weak promotional initiatives. The research recommends adopting a comprehensive, multi-dimensional strategy for preserving the heritage of Tebessa, including comprehensive projects, legal frameworks, digital integration, and a participatory management approach. Collaboration with local and international heritage organizations and educational programs to raise awareness are also essential. These measures aim to preserve the architectural heritage and boost tourism in Tebessa.

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## Introduction.

Architectural and urban heritage is considered one of the most important components that distinguish different cultures and civilizations around the world. It is not just historical buildings and landmarks, but rather a witness to the development and growth of societies and a true expression

of their identity and culture. From this standpoint; The importance of preserving the architectural and urban heritage and the meanings of promoting it are evident as an integral part of trade, tourism and the economy.

Tourism is characterized as one of the most important economic industries in many countries, as it contributes significantly to achieving economic growth and providing job opportunities. In this context, the role of architectural and urban heritage comes in its prominent importance in attracting tourists and enhancing the tourism sector, as historical sites and archaeological monuments constitute a destination for visitors. Those wishing to explore history and culture, thus promoting cultural and heritage tourism. Architectural and urban heritage represents a cultural and economic resource that can be utilized effectively. In addition to its role in attracting tourists, this heritage can also be harnessed as a resource for local development, by providing job opportunities in areas such as conservation. on heritage and cultural tourism, as well as on traditional handicrafts and local trade, however; Many countries face challenges in preserving architectural and urban heritage, including the gradual deterioration of historical buildings and rapid urban development, which can negatively affect local identity and cultural diversity. Therefore, governments and relevant institutions must take effective measures to protect and preserve this heritage, and enhance its role in Supporting tourism and the economic sector.

Accordingly; Architectural and urban heritage represents an important basis in supporting tourism and the economic sector, as it enhances cultural identity and provides local development opportunities, and with continued attention and efforts to protect and preserve it, this heritage can continue to achieve economic and cultural benefits in the long term.

### **1. Problem Statement.**

Architectural and urban heritage constitutes an integral part of national culture and identity, offering significant potential to bolster tourism and economic growth. Nonetheless, it confronts numerous challenges jeopardizing its preservation and longevity. Therefore, pivotal questions arise regarding investment in the tourism sector and economic support through the conservation of architectural and urban heritage:

- What factors influence the sustainability of architectural and urban heritage?
- Can architectural heritage pose challenges or serve as an opportunity for tourism sector development?
- How can a harmonious balance be struck between heritage preservation and the development of modern tourism infrastructure?
- What role does technology play in enriching the cultural tourism experience and promoting architectural heritage?
- To what extent can architectural and urban heritage contribute to local economic revitalization and job creation?

According to the research questions, we develop the following hypotheses:

- Investing in preserving architectural and urban heritage can be a profitable investment for countries and societies.
- Technology can play an important role in attracting tourists and improving their experience in exploring architectural heritage.
- Architectural and urban heritage can be a major factor in enhancing cultural awareness and tourism education.

### **2. Research objectives.**

This research aims to analyze the role of architectural and urban heritage in supporting tourism and the economic sector by achieving a set of main objectives, and addresses the understanding of the importance of architectural and urban heritage as an influential factor in attracting tourists and enhancing the local economy, and analyzing the challenges facing heritage preservation and its role in its impact on tourism. The research also seeks to explore ways in which architectural and urban heritage can be enhanced as a sustainable economic and cultural resource, including the role of technology and innovation in this context, as well as to provide practical recommendations to relevant actors and institutions to enhance the role of architectural and urban heritage in supporting tourism and promoting growth. Sustainable economy, by achieving these objectives, the research attempts to make an effective

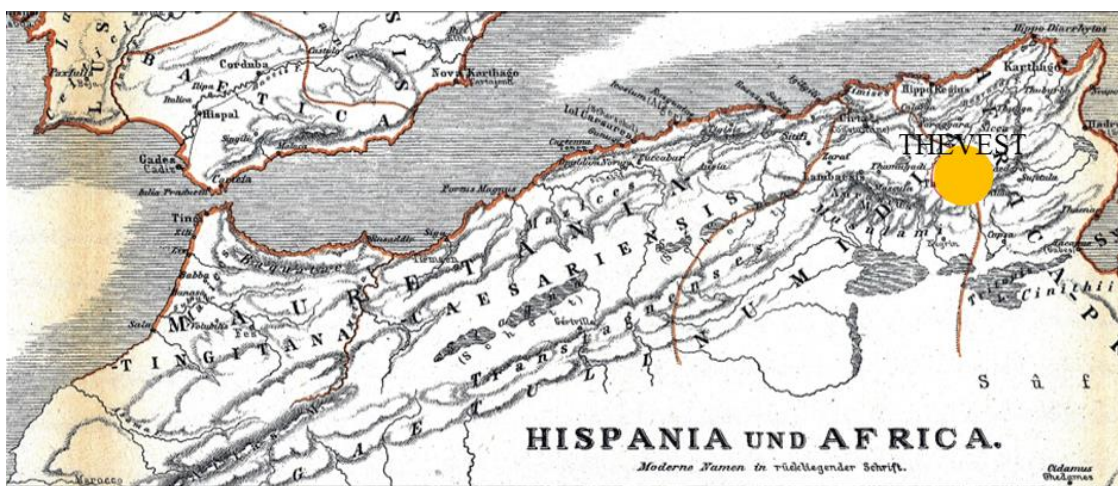
contribution to understanding the relationship between heritage, tourism and the economy, and to provide a tangible contribution to developing policies for preserving heritage and strengthening the tourism sector in the local and international context.

### **3. Materials and Methods.**

The research relied on two fundamental approaches: The first is the historical and descriptive approach, which was allocated to introduce the historical monuments in the case of the study as a first stage of the research, while the research was conducted in a second phase complementary to the first according to the approach of field work and investigation among the active parties, for the purpose of determining whether there is a contribution and a role for the heritage monuments in supporting the tourism sector in the city. as this methodology helps in achieving the primary objectives of the research, and contributes effectively to understanding the problem and developing appropriate perceptions to formulate the necessary recommendations.

### **4. Presentation of the case study: “The city of Tebessa”.**

Tebessa is located in eastern Algeria. It is considered one of the ancient and archaeological cities in the region. It occupied a prominent position in ancient times due to its strategic location on the desert caravan route linking the south and the north. It is also referred to as “Tebesit”, and it is an ancient archaeological site located near present-day Tebessa. (Jemma-Gouzon, 1985)



*Map 1. Location of Thevest (currently Tebessa)*

*Source: The Rediscovery of the Ancient Monuments of Algeria, driven by the Reconstruction of the Missing Parts and Researcher Treatment, 2024*

Many historical references and studies agree that the founding of the city of “Thevest” which is the ancient name of the current city of Tebessa - dates back to the first century AD, during the rule of the Flavian family during the reign of Emperor Visian by the third Augustan military division after it was in Hydra in Tunisia. Tifast was also an important headquarters for the finance and property department during the second and third centuries AD. Tifast was an important administrative center, and the capital of the financial region of the state, and often gathered under its authority the provinces of Hiboun (Annaba) and Hadramaut (Sousse). It maintained these functions throughout the empire, throughout the period It was characterized by Berber conflicts, then Arab invasions and Turkish control, and finally the French invasion (Ballu, 1894).



*Map 2. Location of the city of Tebessa within the state*

*Source: <https://www.baramjak.com/maps>, and Researcher treatment, 2024*

The region knew Christianity in the middle of the third century AD, and during that period it had a bishop named Lucius, consul in Carthage in 256 AD, and it remained under Roman rule until 443 AD. Where did the Vandals, who were of the Aryan race and against Catholicism and did not believe in the spirit of Christ, come and destroyed everything related to the Romans? The Vandals seized all important properties, imposed taxes on citizens, and fortified the city with walls. Archaeological researchers south of the city of Tebessa found evidence of this; They found tablets (48 tablets) containing ownership contracts, purchase and sale contracts, marriage contracts, taxes, etc., but their stability did not last long, as the Byzantines, led by the Byzantine general Solomon, came and eliminated the Vandals in the year 534 AD, and during his first campaign he established a Byzantine fortress (Letronne, 1847). Its walls were built from the stones of the Roman city, and it was fortified with 14 towers. It had two entrances from the north, the triumphal arch of “Caracalla” and from the east, the private door of General Solomon. However, the latter did not survive until he was killed by the local tribe (the Moors) at the city walls in an ambush. At the end of the sixth century AD.

The city of Tebessa witnessed the arrival of the Islamic conquest of the Northwest Africa and became known as Tebessa instead of Thevest (Hardy, 1959). In the year 1573, the region underwent Ottoman rule after the Turkish ruler Stan Pasha seized Tunisia. In the year 1842, the city fell under the French occupation of Algeria until 1962.

As for the present time; Tebessa has been the center of a state in independent Algeria since 1974. It includes 28 municipalities and 12 districts, and its population is more than 245 thousand people, according to the latest statistics. It is a city of a commercial and industrial nature. It is also characterized by great tourist potential, through the archaeological monuments it abounds in, and also because it contains on several other tourist areas such as: (Hammamet, Bakaria, Naqrin...).



## **5. Historical monuments in the city of Tebessa.**

### **5.1. Gate of Caracalla.**

This landmark was completed in the year 212 AD during the era of Roman prosperity. It is called the Gate of Caracalla. It is a triumphal arch dating back to the Roman era. Its main function was to confirm Roman authority in the region and glorify the military and political activities of the Roman emperors. (Kopp, 1922).



*Figure 1. Caracalla Gate*  
*Source: Department of Antiquities, Tebessa*

The Caracalla Gate represents a prominent example of Roman architecture, and is distinguished by its huge arches and beautiful artistic decoration. The landmark has four façades with four official doors decorated with four Corinthian columns, three of which were damaged for reasons that are not precisely known. The façades are located in a symmetrical, cubic position, so that each facade has its back to the other. According to the four directions, each facade was built in honor of a member of the Swiss family, The eastern façade is dedicated to Septimius Severus, the western façade is dedicated to Julia Dimna, and the southern façade is dedicated to Caracalla, who gave his name to the entire landmark. However, the northern façade did not specify the person dedicated to it due to the deformation that occurred on it. The contents of the texts of the inscriptions reflect aspects of the authority of the Suirian family, and the triumphal arch of Caracalla contains four inscriptions, three. Among them are a dedication and another known as the Testament of Cornelius (DONDIN-PAYRE, 2012). The texts of the Arc de Triomphe have provided much for the understanding of some issues in the social history of the city, and in general this gate is now considered an important tourist site and a historical landmark that attracts visitors from different parts of the world to learn about the history of the region and its ancient culture.

### **5.2. The Roman Church: (Basilica of Saint Crispina).**

The Roman church "Basilica", also known as Sainte Crispina Basilica, is located in the city of Tebessa, east of the walls of the current city of Tebessa. It has an area of about 18,000 square meters and is considered one of the largest Roman churches in Africa. It was built in the year 313 AD on the same place where the cuttings were made. The barbarian Crispina, also known as Crispin of Tagar, was killed by the Roman governor Caius Annius Anullinus, this happened because she refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, in contravention of the edict of 304 AD which ordered the entire population to sacrifice to the Roman gods on pain of death in Rejection status.

Saint Crispin was born in Thagart, in the Berber language of Thagari (Tagora, Thagora), which is known today as Taura in the state of Souk Ahras. According to one researcher, the church represents "the most beautiful model of religious architecture in Africa" (Cambon, 1905), based on its unique architecture and spatial division that combines courtyards. The religious buildings and the basements leading to the graves are among the rare historical monuments in the entire world, as they have preserved their original architectural character (TRUILLOT, 2011).



*Figure 2. Saint Crispina in the middle, 'Procession of the Virgins' mosaic in the Basilica of Ravenna, Italy.  
Source: Autor de la basilique de Tébessa*

The scientist Stephen Kesel learned about the truth about this landmark in 1901 AD. Its construction was attributed to the last era of Roman civilization, where the Christian religion experienced victory and prosperity in that era. In 1944, a vault was found, which is an underground chapel that was used to spread Christianity, and then this church was built above it. The honor of naming this church goes to Saint Crispin at the time.



*Figure 3. shows the landmarks and ruins of the Roman church in the city of Tébessa  
Source: Photograph by the researcher, 2024*

The Roman church is divided into two parts, one of which is a garden divided into four sections in the shape of a cross, and the other section includes the port church. It has one entrance in the form of an arch and is intersected by a corridor 52 meters long, paved with solid stones. On its right there is the entrance to the church from the side of the amphitheater, then the portico and the square space in which Only its lower edge remains (figure 3), through which your gaze draws you to the courtyard. The magnificence of the design in this landmark is represented by the large hall divided by circular columns carrying arches and square ones, and all its halls are paved with mosaics. Adjacent to this church are halls for teaching religion, stables for horses, and a shrine. This church is the largest Roman church and a link between North Africa and Europe.

Currently, the church is surrounded by a wall in the form of an iron fence, and its general condition does not suggest much interest, as it can be entered through various outlets other than the main gate, and dust and some wastes are spread inside and around it.

### **5.3. Roman theatre.**

The Roman Theater is located in the center of the city of Tebessa on the eastern side of the Byzantine wall. It is one of the first buildings built by the Romans in the region. It was built during the reign of the fifth consul, Emperor Vespasien, in the year 75 AD (Dondin-Payre, 2012 ). This amphitheater was used as a stadium or theater, and sometimes for wrestling games between knights, prisoners of war, or with predatory animals. According to some studies, its circular shape was discovered during drilling operations, and its diameter is estimated between 50 and 65 meters. The theatrical amphitheater is considered newly discovered in 1859, according to Mr. Hall, the discoverer. This magnificent circular amphitheater has four entrances and rooms for knights, slaves, and predatory animals. It can accommodate about 7,000 spectators (Jean Baradez, 1949).



*Figure 4. A view of the Roman theater  
Source: Department of Antiquities, Tebessa,  
and Researcher treatment, 2024*

The theatrical amphitheater is considered a national classification and is considered one of the open-air museums. Its location is fenced, but it is exposed daily to throwing dirt because of its proximity to the market, and it is also covered in dust and debris. It requires a comprehensive study to highlight and prepare it.

### **5.4. Temple of Minerve.**

This historical religious landmark is located inside the Byzantine wall in the center of the city of Tebessa, not far from the right of the Caracalla Gate. It is a place of worship and a house for the gods among the Romans (Temple Corinthian). It was completed in conjunction with the Arch of Caracalla during the reign of Emperor Septime Sévère (Lucius Septimius Severus Pertinax) between the years 193 and 217 AD (Ferdinand Cambon, 1912). It was dedicated to Minerve, the goddess of wisdom in that era, has four columns on its main facade, and is tetrastyle like what Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (Roman architect) described, and decorated, carried by columns in the form of a truncated pyramid embedded in the walls of the structure; It is raised 4 meters above the outside level, and is accessed by a twenty-step staircase. (*Figure 5 shows less than 20 degrees due to damage*).





*Figure 5. Minerva Temple in Tebessa  
Source: Department of Antiquities, Tebessa, and  
Researcher treatment, 2024*

It is 15 meters long, 9 meters wide, and 9 meters high. Its interior decoration is very simple. On the contrary, the outer frieze is exquisitely decorated. A large portal is fronted by the Roman house of the gods and has arched lower rooms. The columns are decorated with the heads of rams and bulls with their sacrificial ribbons, and in front there are eagles with open wings, carrying two snakes in their claws, decorating those ribbons with larger dimensions; These eagles were considered to be owls, the birds of Minerva, and they are what gave them their name. During the Ottoman period, the temple was used as a residence or headquarters for the Muslim judge. Then the French exploited it as an office, a house for officers, a restaurant, a warehouse, and a prison as well. In the year 1873, it was converted into a Catholic church, and the thinking became serious. To be a headquarters for antiquities in 1892 (GREENLAGH Michael, 2014 ), and in 1920 it was converted into a museum (Stéphane, 1902 ). It still maintains this function as a museum to this day.

##### **5.5. The Byzantine Wall: (The Fortress).**

Among the most important and prominent archaeological buildings in the city is this huge landmark that was erected in the year 535 AD by the penguin Solomon. According to (Ballu, 1894), the construction of this fort dates back to the beginning of the fifth century AD, and under the great influence of Saint-Augustin, and aims to protect the city and expand the influence of the Byzantine Empire in the region and repel enemy attacks, the Caracalla Gate was integrated with this wall on the northern side, while the fortification includes 14 guard towers and four main gates. Most parts of this landmark were dilapidated, but the French restored it during the colonial era. They used a large part of it as a military barracks. This landmark is distinguished by three original doors, namely the Caracalla Gate, the Solomon Gate, and the Chellah Gate, in addition to three small doors that the French added later. The landmark was damaged during the sixties and seventies of the last century, when the Chellah Gate and Constantine Gate were destroyed, And then underwent a restoration and cleaning process using sand in the 1980s, and archaeologists also conducted several studies on it to better understand its history and features.

The Byzantine wall surrounds the old city (the current city center). It is a rectangular perimeter with a length of 320 meters and a width of 280 meters, with an average height of approximately 9 meters. This archaeological landmark is considered a witness to the Byzantine settlement in the fifth century AD, and it also represents a historical landmark that distinguishes the city of Tebessa. On June 26, 1873, as part of research and excavation operations during the French colonial period, Charles-Jean Laisné, an architect associated with the Historical Monuments Committee, proposed a response to the request for classification and granted financial assistance of 2,000 francs.



*Figure 7. Shows a section of the Byzantine wall. Source: Antiquities Department - Tébessa and Researcher treatment, 2024*

On this occasion, the architect believes that there will be great interest in recording the most ancient monuments that abound in Algeria, because it is really difficult to save them from the destruction that makes some of them disappear every day (Benguedda, 2023).

#### **6. Discussion: the urban dimension of the archaeological monuments in the city of Tébessa.**

What distinguishes the archaeological monuments in the city of Tébessa is their strategic location and their spread in the current city center, as it is considered a major part of the old city center, which gives it a special attraction for tourists passing through the city center and at the same time gives it value over those sprawling antiquities outside the urban centers. The city of Tébessa is distinguished from others by the presence of the archaeological monuments in the middle of its urban fabric, which are in harmony with the urban (Castel, 1906), environmental and social nature that characterizes the city. The Byzantine wall protects the ancient center of the city. While the rest of the landmarks are not far from this center, as the Roman theater is located on the eastern side of the Byzantine wall, and the Roman church is located on the northern side of the wall, while the Caracalla Gate was integrated into the Byzantine wall that contained it and made it a main gate to the city, while the Temple of Minerve remains near this gate. However, it is located inside the wall.



*Plan 1. the distribution of archaeological sites within the urban fabric of Tébessa city. Source: Google Maps and Researcher treatment, 2024*

### **6.1. Integration of the urban dimension with archaeological monuments.**

The presence of archaeological monuments within the urban fabric, specifically in the city center. It creates great challenges for actors in the field of heritage preservation in parallel with the increasing urban growth, as the location provides more positives for introducing these monuments, while reducing the opportunities for preservation and restoration, due to the continuous deterioration and the indifference of some of the residents through wrong practices such as throwing waste and others, and from this standpoint, and considering that the city of Tebessa is witnessing a high population density, especially in the city center (more than 500 people/ha), if we count the number of daily visitors arriving for shopping purposes and to perform some of the public services provided by the public facilities located in the city center, such as: the municipality, police services, Banks, doctors, etc. From this standpoint, coordination must be made at more than one level in order to ensure:

- Organizing public spaces in a way that enhances the attractiveness of archaeological monuments and facilitates visitors' access to them.
- Rehabilitating historical areas to provide a suitable environment for living and working without harming archaeological monuments.
- Designing new buildings in a way that suits the cultural and historical character of the region.
- Directing investments towards projects that support heritage preservation and promote sustainable economic growth.

### **6.2. The impact of the urban environment on archaeological monuments.**

The urban environment greatly affects archaeological monuments, and continuously, as long as there is urban dynamism and population growth, which in turn results in an expansion of the land use area and the diversity of its uses and functions in the vicinity of these monuments. The negative repercussions of this environment vary in multiple ways on the architectural and physical aspect of the various buildings and monuments, and are more negative in the absence of a clear and parallel urban strategy that combines urban growth that must be kept pace with and directed towards the best. Between protecting the architectural heritage and preserving all the buildings and historical monuments associated with it, it becomes necessary to develop urban planning plans for the city in the service of the heritage, and at the same time direct urban expansion by taking advantage of the city's history, and including its urban and architectural advantages within future development and urban expansion plans (Mustafa, 2005).

Below are some of the elements relevant to the impact on the deterioration of architectural heritage in urban surroundings:

- **Environmental pollution:** Pollution from cars, industries and homes in cities can rapidly erode monuments, for example; Atmospheric pollution can cause erosion of stone, metal, and other archaeological surfaces.
- **Urban development:** The rapid development of infrastructure in cities may lead to the destruction or distortion of archaeological monuments. Archaeological monuments may be removed in favor of new construction projects or neglected due to insufficient attention and resources being directed to their maintenance. This characteristic applies to the case of the city of Tebessa, which had part of its old center removed. (Roman) in exchange for the completion of approximately 150 collective housing units based on the model of new urban housing areas.
- **Changing land uses:** Changing land uses in cities may lead to changes in the urban landscape surrounding archaeological monuments, which affects their attractiveness and their ability to attract visitors and preserve them. The issue becomes more complicated by creating new activities that pollute the surroundings and the urban landscape, which gives a distorted character and creates blurring of the visual. These landmarks, especially with parallel and unlicensed activities.
- **Increased traffic and tourism:** Increased traffic and tourism in cities may lead to the erosion of monuments due to constant friction, exposure to pollution and human pressure.
- **Climate changes:** Climate changes in the urban environment can affect archaeological monuments, such as increased rainfall or frequent exposure to storms, which can lead to their deterioration and erosion.

In order to preserve archaeological monuments in the urban environment, local authorities and civil society must take measures to preserve the historical and cultural identity of the city and direct



urban development in a way that respects these monuments and ensures their continuity for future generations.

### **7. The development and tourism dimension of architectural and urban heritage.**

Urban heritage is considered an important source of tourism income and strengthening the local economy, as heritage contributes to tourism development, which in turn preserves the heritage and works to pass it on to future generations. Tourism investment in urban heritage also enhances cultural interaction between peoples and contributes to cultural exchange and mutual understanding (Muhammad, 2013). Tourism development is considered Urban heritage is one of the most important tributaries of tourism, as its importance is evident in the close connection between tourism and these sites, as they reflect the culture of diverse civilizations and represent a rich source for acquiring different knowledge, and individuals from different societies seek to visit these sites for the purpose of viewing and learning about different cultures, and enjoying cultural diversity. And the urbanism you present.

As a result of the increased demand for visiting architectural and urban heritage sites by the tourism sector, there has become an urgent need for various countries, which depend on tourism as a main and important source of their national income, to develop and invest their tourism products and increase their gains from the tourism industry through the development of these sites, and with this the growth; Many challenges and obstacles have emerged associated with the process of developing these sites, as they are one of the most important elements of cultural tourism. In this context, countries working to develop architectural and urban heritage sites face a set of problems related to tourism rehabilitation programs based on the principle of sustainable development. These programs include focusing to develop and preserve these sites, and achieve acceptable investment returns for the sake of sustainability. The challenges facing these countries also include maintenance and restoration work, financing, and management of tourist sites.

(Boyd, 2011) pointed out that the various experiences in developing architectural and urban heritage sites for the purpose of tourism development and investment have revealed a number of obstacles, including issues of ownership of the lands on which these sites are located and the applicable legislation and regulations. In addition, these obstacles include investment laws. Organizing and protecting archaeological areas, and determining appropriate uses to preserve the authenticity of heritage. In addition, the behaviors of local residents, their awareness of the importance of these sites, and their cooperation with the authorities responsible for development are among the most important factors influencing the development and investment process, by understanding the local community's awareness of the importance of these sites, and its cooperation with the concerned authorities, sustainable and successful development can be achieved. In addition, the community's awareness of the importance of the tourism product and its participation in the development process plays a pivotal role in marketing and highlighting it effectively. Therefore, tourism development efforts must focus on Encouraging positive interaction between stakeholders and local residents, and educating the community about the importance of preserving heritage and benefiting from it in a sustainable and profitable way for everyone (Ramadan, 2017).

### **8. The reality of tourism in the city of Tebessa.**

Despite the enormous tourism potential that the city abounds with, most notably the historical monuments, tourism remains at the back of the attention except at the official or popular level, and this is the result of negative practices on the part of all actors, including the population. Most of the heritage tourist sites are drowned in waste, great neglect, and deterioration. The city's local tourism and economic sector is improved and supported on a daily basis, which explains that all policies and legislative frameworks have not lived up to the level of improvement and support for the city's local tourism and economic sector. Local sources in the state of Tebessa indicate that the local authorities in the state of Tebessa, during the year 2023, carried out cleaning operations during which more than: 560 tons of household waste that was distorting various monuments and archaeological sites in the state capital, and this was in a large cleaning campaign in which various public and private institutions participated, as well as with the participation of a significant number of residents and local associations. The numbers also indicate a weak influx of foreign tourists. The number did not exceed 56 tourists in recent years, while the total number of tourists reached about 4,810 tourists in 2022, including 9 foreign tourists. This



is according to the numbers announced by the Department of Museums and Archaeological Sites of the Province of Tebessa.

In light of the current situation, it is not possible to talk about an evaluation of the heritage tourism process in the city of Tebessa as long as the waste is raised in tons, and as long as there is no clearly defined policy that combines various local and national initiatives in one context that aims to enhance local and national tourism within the framework of sustainability.

Table 1. Shows the number of tourists arriving in the city of Tebessa from 2020 to 2022.

Year	Number of tourists	Number of foreign tourists
2020	1723	12
2021	4628	09
2022	4810	56

Source: Department of Museums of Tebessa Province, 2024.

The relationship of tourism to heritage monuments and the impact of the historical and cultural dimension on the development of the economic sector in the case of the study; It still requires more maturity and continuous work at several levels, including at the regulatory and legal level to provide greater protection for all physical tourism components related to architectural and urban heritage, and at the population and awareness level by organizing awareness initiatives and days for the benefit of the population and introducing the role and value of architectural and urban heritage in activating the economic sector. And bringing in additional resources that benefit the city and the population at the same time, as well as at the management level in order to pay more attention to the management of heritage cultural properties according to terms and conditions that guarantee the preservation of what exists on the one hand, and attracting financial funds for research and discovery on the other hand, and it is worth noting in this The area is that the historical sites of the city of Tebessa have not benefited from any restoration process as a structured project, with the exception of a project that was stopped during the past years, which was allocated to the Caracalla Gate, as the works were not carried out according to the technical standards for architectural restoration, and with the exception also of some simple operations that go beyond cleaning campaigns that are initiated according to seasons or occasions. Situational.

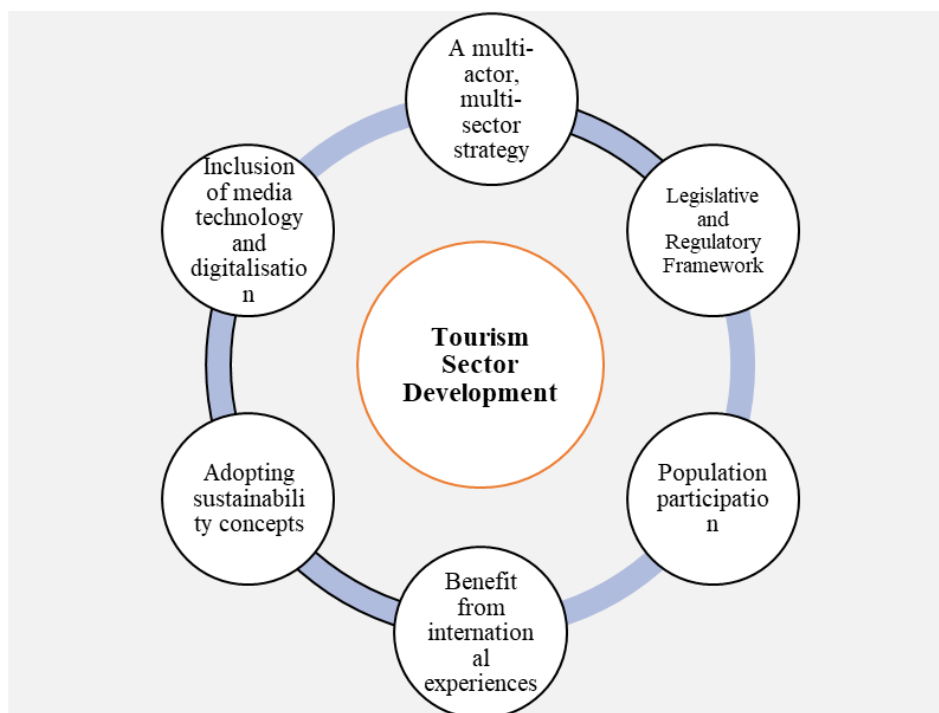
### **9. Prospects for reviving cultural tourism in the city of Tebessa.**

In order to advance the tourism sector in the city of Tebessa and exploit historical sites and monuments with a heritage dimension, we propose through this research paper to develop a multidisciplinary and multi-actor strategy, and to follow a methodology that recommends adopting the principles and foundations of sustainable development in management, planning and exploitation. The digital dimension and modern technology must also be included in the inventory. All properties with distinctive architectural and urban value for the purpose of harnessing them in the service of tourism in general, and working to multiply incomes and resources directed to restoration, maintenance and preservation. The most important recommendations can be summarized in the following points:

- All active parties in the city, especially in the tourism and cultural sector, must work according to an effective strategy and contracts developed according to well-studied and achievable goals. This strategy may not find its way to embodiment unless it has a legislative and regulatory base upon which ideas are built and practices in the field are based on them.
- Sustainable development in its environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions; It constitutes one of the modern approaches to preserving material heritage and transmitting the memory of peoples to subsequent generations, which makes it necessary to work on it and adopt it at all levels, especially the environmental dimension, which is concerned with preserving natural and environmental resources, including preserving heritage monuments from any deterioration and damage that could occur. It has, and the social dimension has an effective role, especially with regard to population participation and activating it in the service of preserving architectural and architectural heritage, by working to organize study and awareness days for the benefit of the local community and introducing the nature of heritage preservation, where instead of the citizen being the cause of the deterioration of historical

monuments, he becomes an effective element. In preserving it, work must be done to activate the role of associations and strengthen them to serve this field.

- The role of information and communication technology is no less important in preserving urban and architectural heritage, as this technology must be harnessed to serve the architectural and urban heritage through scientific research and work on digital inventory and architectural display of all the material heritage that the city abounds, by placing floors, media and digital applications that define the importance of heritage. They serve as identification and advertising papers to attract the largest possible number of tourists.



*Figure 8. Proposed Plan for Developing the Tourism Sector  
Source: Prepared by the researcher, 2024*

### **Conclusion.**

The research concluded that the city of Tebessa possesses significant tourist attractions, highlighted by a collection of historically significant monuments of architectural excellence. These include landmarks such as the Gate of Caracalla, the Romanesque Church, the Temple of Minerva, as well as urban sites like the Roman Theater, the Archaeological Park, and others. Collectively, these elements offer substantial potential for the city's tourism sector and local economy development.

However, the research identified that these landmarks are currently underutilized in supporting the tourism sector, indicating a need for increased efforts and significant investment in heritage preservation. The study revealed a notable lack of attention towards maintaining the architectural and urban heritage of the city. Some monuments remain neglected, buried under debris and waste, despite their cultural significance

The numbers also showed that the number of foreign tourists is very weak compared to what it should be as long as there are many elements and attractions. In this context, the research presents a set of recommendations and suggestions that support the preservation of the architectural and urban heritage and serve the tourism sector. We summarize them as follows:

- Working to develop a multi-actor and multi-disciplinary strategy, with clear features and goals, specifically designed to preserve the architectural and urban heritage of the city of Tebessa, including inventory, classification, and allocating the necessary financial funds for preservation and restoration.
- Incorporating the principles of sustainable development into all executive and management plans for this sector.

- Activating population participation as a modern business approach to serve the tourism sector and the tangible heritage sector.
- Exploiting information and communication technology and modern digital media and making them serve the architectural and urban heritage, especially the advertising and publicity aspect of all the cultural heritage that the region abounds with, whether tangible or intangible heritage.

Concerned authorities must cooperate with local and international organizations specialized in preserving cultural heritage to exchange experiences and support in preserving historical buildings and monuments.

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### **Declaration of Interest Statement.**

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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